

United States, and space exploration programs throughout the world.

The couple moved to Houston, TX, in 1998 and started a family. As Ilan trained for his space missions, Rona continued on a new adventure of her own: holistic medicine. The new surroundings gave Rona the opportunity to expand her knowledge of holistic medicine by studying new techniques, including the treatment of astronauts.

On February 1, 2003, tragedy struck when the space shuttle Columbia, carrying Ilan and 5 others, disintegrated upon re-entry. Columbia was commanded by Rick Husband, an alumnus of my alma mater, California State University, Fresno. Facing not only a personal, but also a national loss, Rona found herself in the midst of international events and memorials, representing not only herself, but the entire nation of Israel.

While still coping with the passing of her husband, Rona also lost her brother in a battle against leukemia. Shortly thereafter, Rona and her four beautiful children, Asaf, Tal, Yiftach and Noa, returned to Israel, where she found solace in her holistic healing practice and earned an MA in Holistic Health at Lesley College.

In 2009, Rona's eldest son Asaf, a gifted pilot, was tragically killed in an F-16 training accident. Once again, Rona was forced to deal with the death of a loved one, yet found the strength to continue her passion for helping others.

Today, Rona continues to inspire people across the world with her public speaking on loss and healing. She works with several organizations and foundations including her own Ramon Foundation, an organization that promotes educational and communal values through space and scientific studies.

On October 20, 2012, a film honoring Ilan titled "An Article of Hope," will be shown in Palo Alto, CA, with Rona speaking in memoriam of her husband. This special event will be held in remembrance of the Columbia disaster nearly 10 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in celebrating the strength and compassion of Rona Ramon, a woman who has turned tragedy into an opportunity to promote good throughout the world, and who continues to be an inspiration to myself and others.

HONORING MRS. OMEILA
MCKINNEY

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 19, 2012

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable librarian, Omeila McKinney. Omeila was born and reared on a plantation in Bourbon, Mississippi, to John Fred and Nancy Johnson. In January 1964 she and her family of five brothers and five sisters relocated to Mound Bayou, Mississippi where she resides today. She is a member of St. Mark Church of God in Christ in Mound Bayou, Mississippi. Her maternal grandparents Lem and Elsie Frye passed on a legacy of holiness that left the family without excuse when it comes to salvation. Her paternal grandparents Marshall, Sr. and Sarah were also devout people of God.

Omeila always liked to read even as a small child. Her dad taught her to read when she was three years old. He was a great supporter of his children obtaining an education even though he did not get his high school diploma until 1966. Her love for books led her to reading centers in elementary school where she read every book she could get her hands on and later to the library where she read so many books that the librarian gave her special permission to check out as many books as she liked. Upon graduating from Coahoma Junior College, in Clarksdale, Mississippi in 1969 with an Associates of Arts Degree in Social Studies, she furthered her education at Delta State College where she earned a Bachelor of Science in Education. She taught in Social Studies in the Quitman County School District while pursuing a master's degree at Delta State University in library science.

After receiving a master of library science degree in 1974 from Delta State University, Omeila McKinney began her career as a high school library media specialist at John F. Kennedy High School in Mound Bayou, Mississippi. She was a professional library media specialist who has a broad understanding of the educational system and works closely with teachers, administrators and students in selecting and evaluating materials to support the instructional program.

Omeila was dedicated to the children of John F. Kennedy High and made great strides toward educating them in the use of media such as reading, research, audiovisual production and many other useful instruments that would assist the students to succeed. Students were also given comprehensive test to measure their skills which they did excel.

In the early 1990s, she wrote a mini grant which she used to purchase the first multimedia computer in the Mound Bayou School District. Upon receiving the computer she was aware she did not know what to do with it. However, she was determined to learn and solicited two students who were avid computer users to give her lessons. She took that knowledge and later became one of the best computer users in the district using her knowledge to help her co-workers as well as many students.

After serving the Mound Bayou Public Schools for 26 years, she applied and was accepted to the North Bolivar School District in Shelby, Mississippi as their high school library media specialist. She continued the job she loved so much for another three years until her retirement in 2004. A year after retirement she took a position as branch librarian in Shelby, Mississippi at the public library. There she was helpful in bringing great improvements to the public library. After leaving the Shelby public library, Omeila returned to Broad Street High School in 2006 to work as a part time library media specialist. Her plan and goal was to help children improve their reading and research skills by utilizing the great resources of the library through fun and interactive activities.

Omeila uses her skills as a library media specialist in her role as the reading fair coordinator for the North Bolivar School District. Students she has worked with have won district, regional, and state honors for the past four years. She enjoys her job, students and her co-workers.

Omeila's profession as a librarian has had a positive impact on her husband of 37 years,

Claude McKinney. During Mr. McKinney's tenure as an educator he utilized research and other knowledge to enhance his students learning abilities. The couple has four children, Desmond, Sheri, Preamiller and Tanjanikia McKinney.

NORTHEAST COUNSELING
SERVICES

HON. LOU BARLETTA

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 19, 2012

Mr. BARLETTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Northeast Counseling Services, which is celebrating its 40th anniversary of service to our community.

Northeast Counseling Services, founded on July 1, 1972, is a professional organization dedicated to improving quality of life by providing comprehensive and effective behavioral health services through a caring and responsive partnership with individuals, families, and the community. They serve our community as one of the largest providers of behavioral health services in Northeastern Pennsylvania.

Northeast Counseling Services offers a wide range of psychiatric services for children, adolescents, and adults including crisis intervention, intake and evaluation, inpatient and outpatient services, and intensive case management, among others. Northeast Counseling also offers emergency service available twenty-four hours a day, 7 days a week, including holidays. They have office locations in Nanticoke, Hazleton, and Lehighton.

Mr. Speaker, for the past forty years, Northeast Counseling Services has proudly served the people of Northeastern Pennsylvania. I commend the group on its 40th anniversary and wish it continued success.

COMMEMORATING THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WATSONVILLE WETLANDS WATCH

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, October 19, 2012

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to call attention to the 20th Anniversary of the Watsonville Wetlands Watch, which is a remarkable community organization in my district. Dedicated to the protection, restoration, and appreciation of the wetlands of the Pajaro Valley, this group engages members of the Watsonville community and students of the Pajaro Valley Unified School District, drawing public attention to the rich uplands and dependent area wildlife.

Fed by the waters of the Pajaro Valley watershed, and linked together by nine species of fish and 250 species of birds, including many that are threatened or endangered, the six Sloughs of the Watsonville slough system form one of the largest remaining freshwater marshlands in the state's coastal zone. These Sloughs provide nursing grounds for fish and wildlife. Aquatic plants filter out impurities in the water, sequester carbon dioxide, and provide a buffer from land to sea—protecting water quality from impacts of soil erosion and